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**7.0 PROGRAM**  
**7.8 Complaints/Feedback**

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**POLICY**

A complaint/feedback process is an important part of providing quality support that is responsive to people's needs and that supports continuous improvement in service delivery. The information received through a complaints/feedback process can assist the agency to take steps to better support individuals and/or improve administrative practices.

The agency will take complaints seriously, and review/investigate matters brought to its attention. The agency is not, however, expected to attempt to resolve complaints that it may determine to be frivolous or vexatious.

**PROCEDURE**

**Definitions**

**“Complaint”** is an expression of dissatisfaction related to the services and/or supports that are provided. A complaint may be expressed by a person with a developmental disability who is receiving services and supports from the service agency, or a person acting on their behalf, or by the general public, regarding the services and supports that are provided by the service agency. A complaint may be made formally such as a letter or informally such as a verbal complaint.

**“Feedback”** may be positive or negative and is related to the services and/ or supports that are provided by the agency. Feedback may be solicited such as information and comments collected through a satisfaction survey or unsolicited such as a letter from a person, a person acting on their behalf or general public about the services and supports that the agency provides. Feedback may be made formally such as a survey or a letter or informally such as a verbal complaint.

Kinsmen Community Residence will provide information on the complaints/feedback process to all individuals who come into service with the agency, and/or a person acting on their behalf where applicable, as part of the Admission Procedures.

**French Language Services**

If a complaint is made with regards to French Language Services, every attempt will be made to address the issue being raised and provide a solution. An example, if the individual or family request a document be provided into the French Language, the agency will have the document translated if possible, depending feasible costs involved and relevance to the needs of the individual and/or family.

**Complaints/Feedback Process**

The agency will document and retain all information and attempt to resolve complaints or address any negative feedback. Wherever possible, the agency will make reasonable efforts to resolve or address the matter to the mutual satisfaction of both the individual and the agency. At all points of the process, the individual has the right and will be informed they have the right to access family or appropriate community services for support or advocacy.

1. It is understood that any complaints/negative feedback should be discussed initially between the staff and the individual for a resolution.

2. If a complaint/negative feedback is unresolved with speaking to staff, the individual will be informed by staff that he/she may contact the Manager. Staff must also notify the Manager of the situation, within 3 working days. Any issues that could possibly endanger the individual's health or safety will be directed to the Manager by the staff the day the complaint/negative feedback is brought forward and action will be taken immediately by the Manager to safeguard the health and safety of the person before starting an investigation.
3. The Manager will investigate the issues and, if deemed appropriate, hold a meeting between those involved. The Manager will inform, verbally if a verbal complaint was made or in writing if a written complaint was made, those involved of any decision, action, etc. that will be taken, within 15 working days. The Manager may need to refer to the Prevention & Reporting of Abuse, Neglect, Harassment, Discrimination & Exploitation Policy.
4. Any complaints/negative feedback regarding the Manager or issues that could be detrimental to the agency will be forwarded to the Board of Directors. Issues will be brought to the next Board meeting. Any issue that could possibly endanger the individual's health or safety must be forwarded the day the complaint/negative feedback is brought forward and action will be taken immediately by the Board to safeguard the health and safety of the person before starting an investigation.
5. The Board will investigate the issues and, if deemed appropriate, hold a meeting between those involved. The Board will inform, verbally if a verbal complaint was made or in writing if a written complaint was made, those involved of any decision, action, etc. that will be taken, within 1 month of the Board receiving the complaint. The Board may need to refer to the Prevention & Reporting of Abuse, Neglect, Harassment, Discrimination & Exploitation Policy.

Every effort will be made to avoid conflict of interest that may arise between the person who makes the complaint or provides negative feedback and those who may be involved in the review, documentation, investigation, resolution, and notification. If deemed necessary to achieve this, an outside party may be asked to assist in the process. The dates for responding to the individual may change due to the bringing in of an outside party.

The process will be kept free of any coercion, intimidation, or bias, either before, during, or after the process is completed. Any parties who may have a conflict of interest will be removed from the aspect of the process that could result in an unfair resolution. The agency will ensure that any individual who submits a complaint or provides negative feedback is not at risk of having his/her services and supports negatively impacted or withdrawn, because of submitting the complaint or negative feedback.

### **Service Evaluation**

A yearly Service Evaluation will be completed by individuals being supported at the residence to provide feedback to the agency. The agency will respond to any negative feedback as per the Service Evaluation process.

### **Complaints/Feedback Regarding Abuse**

The agency will respond to any complaints/feedback regarding abuse in the following manner:

- report to the police in the case of alleged, suspected or witnessed abuse that may constitute a criminal offence, as required by Ontario Regulation 299/10 regarding quality assurance measures made under the *Services and Supports to Promote the Social Inclusion of Persons with Developmental Disabilities Act, 2008*; and/or

- Report to the ministry as a serious occurrence through the ministry's Serious Occurrence reporting process and the agency policy on Serious Occurrences, based on the nature of the complaint/feedback.

### **Review & Analysis**

The agency will share information about its complaints/feedback process, and/or about complaints/feedback, as part of the ministry's risk assessment process, upon request by the ministry.

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